

JOSEPH P. RILEY JR. CENTER FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

2023 - 2024

YEAR AT A GLANCE



COLLEGE OF
CHARLESTON
THE RILEY CENTER FOR
LIVABLE COMMUNITIES



About the Riley Center



Mission Statement

The Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities is an interdisciplinary initiative of the College of Charleston whose mission is to leverage the intellectual resources of the College to support the economic and cultural vibrancy of the City of Charleston and other communities throughout South Carolina, the United States and the world.



Vision Statement

With access to the resources of the College of Charleston's School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Riley Center seeks to be a leader in livable communities research, education, and practice.

The Riley Center defines “livable communities” as those which are economically and culturally vibrant, with equitable access for all residents to education, jobs, healthcare, housing, parks and recreation and arts and culture.



Values

There is no single value that embodies Mayor Riley, rather it is a combination of vision, courage, inclusiveness, perseverance, and the tenacity to never be outworked that enabled his effective and impactful leadership.

The Riley Center for Livable Communities is guided by the values of our namesake Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. Based on input of our Advisory Board, these values have been identified and are incorporated into our planning and goal setting, project development, and in the work we do.



Core Competencies

The Riley Center achieves its mission by connecting community needs with faculty, staff and student expertise. The Center has five core competencies under which it offers a variety of services.

These five areas are:

1. Nonprofit and Local Government Support
2. Public Health and Sustainability
3. Education, Arts and Culture
4. Urban Design, Planning and Housing
5. Public Safety



Our Team

The Riley Center operates with a small team of full-time employees, undergraduate and graduate students, Executives in Residence, Riley Center Fellows, and College of Charleston faculty and staff from various departments.

Our 2023-2024 staff included:

 <p>Joseph P. Riley Jr., Executive in Residence, Former Mayor of Charleston (1975 - 2015)</p>	 <p>Kendra B. Stewart, Ph.D. Riley Center Director</p>	 <p>Ali Moriarty, M.P.A. Riley Center Assistant Director</p>	 <p>Heather Zeidler Operations Manager</p>	 <p>Marla Robertson, M.P.A. Assistant Director of the Masters of Public Administration Program</p>
 <p>Matt Nowlin, Ph.D. Director of the Masters of Public Administration Program</p>	 <p>Bill Tomes Executive in Residence</p>	 <p>Bob O'Neill, M.P.A. Executive in Residence,</p>	 <p>Gerald "Jerry" Gordon, Ph.D. Riley Center Fellow</p>	 <p>Morgan Hughey, Ph.D. Faculty Fellow</p>
 <p>Kate Keeney, Ph.D. Faculty Fellow</p>	 <p>Hsin-Ching Wu, Ph.D. Faculty Fellow</p>	 <p>Brumby McLeod, Ph.D. Faculty Fellow</p>	 <p>Elizabeth Clark College of Charleston Undergraduate Intern</p>	 <p>Bryson Stutts College of Charleston Undergraduate Intern</p>
 <p>Alani Boyd College of Charleston Undergraduate Intern</p>	 <p>Arianna Parker, MPA Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Jena Copley, MPA/MES Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Katherine "Kit" Kelly, MPA/MES Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Virginia Long, MPA Graduate Assistant</p>
 <p>Catherine Holmes, MPA/MES Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Rebecca Hyleman, MPA Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Autumn Blanchard, MPA/MES Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Kerlyn Mondesir, MPA Graduate Assistant</p>	 <p>Jack Wedge, MPA Graduate Assistant</p>



Advisory Board

The Riley Center is very fortunate to have a distinguished advisory board who offer their time, commitment, and expertise to achieve the Riley Center's Mission.



DAVID AGNEW
CAPERS BARR
RUSTY BENNETT
RON BOGLE
SANDRA CABELL
GINNY DEERIN
CHARLTON DESAUSSURE JR.
YVONNE EVANS
FOSTER GAILLARD
LEWIS HUDGINS
LEE HIGDON
RAY HUFF
LINDA KETNER
CHRIS MARLIN
CLAY MIDDLETON
LAYTON MCCURDY
SCOTT PARKER
ELISE PARTIN
DAVID RAWLE
ROBERT ROSEN
HENRY SMYTHE
MARY ANN SULLIVAN
STEVE SWANSON
SHEILA WERTIMER



SPOTLIGHT: Union Pier

From June 2023 to March 2024, the Riley Center team led a community-driven public engagement process on behalf of the State Ports Authority (SPA), related to the development of Union Pier, a 70-acre property along Charleston’s peninsular waterfront. Our largest project to date, Riley Center team members recruited more than 70 volunteers, including a 14-member Stakeholder Advisory Committee and a Community Advisory Council comprised of more than 50 representatives from local nonprofit organizations, community groups, and neighborhood associations. Additionally, the Riley Center commissioned a team of world-renowned design consultants led by Sasaki, a globally recognized award-winning design firm based out of Boston.

Together, the team members and volunteers engaged directly with around 1,000 community members through meetings and events and indirectly with nearly 5,000 community members through the Union Pier interactive website. In March, the Riley Center’s role concluded with a culminating report outlining the effort, along with community feedback and research findings related to the site and its redevelopment.



Image courtesy of the Preservation Society of Charleston



SPOTLIGHT: Gullah Geechee Heritage Preservation Project



The Gullah Geechee Heritage Preservation Project is a collaborative initiative focused on preserving historic Gullah Geechee and African American ancestral communities and their cultural sites. Funded by the Historic Preservation Fund’s Underrepresented Communities Grant Program and supported by the City of Charleston, the Preservation Society of Charleston, Charleston County, the Town of Mt. Pleasant and the Riley Center, the project aims to document and protect significant sites, assist with formal recognition, and foster sustainable partnerships for ongoing preservation efforts.



SPOTLIGHT: Riley Mayors' Design Fellowship



In February of 2024, the Riley Center hosted its sixth year of the Riley Mayors' Design Fellowship. The program is held in partnership with Clemson University, the Municipal Association of SC, and the SC Arts Commission.

Mayors from across South Carolina were paired with Clemson graduate students and experts in landscape architecture and downtown revitalization to address an issue or a proposed project in their town or city.

Also this year, thanks to generous donations by the Municipal Association of South Carolina and a number of mayors across South Carolina, the Riley Mayors' Design Fellowship will be endowed for many years to come!



SPOTLIGHT: Athenian Program 2024

The Athenian Program found a new home with The Riley Center this year! The program is a premier leadership development opportunity for senior level public sector executives, providing an opportunity to delve into major challenges at this stage in their careers.

Fifteen local government leaders from around the United States, plus a design team of distinguished public sector executives, gathered in Lake City, SC for a week of training, empowerment and fellowship.



BY THE NUMBERS

31

South Carolina Counties Served

92

South Carolina Cities Served

400+

Nationwide

Local Government Employees
Who Received Training

2,000+

People Who Utilized
Riley Center Meeting Spaces

40

Total Grants and Contracts

\$1,027,500

Total Grant Funding



Complete Project List

Professional Development

- Leading EDGE: Engaging, Developing, Growing and Empowering Local Government through Leadership and High Performance
- Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Leadership Academy
- Local Government Leadership Institute (LGLI)
- LGLI Advanced Leadership Academy (ALA)
- Athenian Program

Community Partners

- Center for Creative Retirement
- Charleston Area Lifelong Learning
- Vantage Point Foundation
- Charleston Leaders
- SC Department of Veterans Affairs
- Social Emotional Learning of SC

Strategic Planning, Trainings, Evaluations and Facilitations

- City of Greenville - Leadership Training
- Mount Pleasant Waterworks - Leadership Training
- South Carolina Association of Counties - Leadership Training
- Francis Marion University's Fred R. Sheheen Non-Profit Leadership Institute - Leadership Training
- Town of Lexington Police Department - Leadership Training
- Charleston County EMS - Leadership Training
- Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) - Evaluation of Board of Directors
- SC Department of Administration - Project Review/Evaluation
- Hanahan Public Works - Evaluation of Operations
- City of Columbia Fire Department - Promotional Process Facilitation
- Dorchester County - Opioid Abatement Strategic Planning
- King Street Business Improvement District - Strategic Planning
- Isle of Palms Fire Department - Strategic Planning
- Charleston County - Strategic Planning
- Historic Charleston Foundation - Tourism Plan
- Town of Walterboro - Strategic Plan Update
- SC Office of Resilience - Strategic Planning
- City of Orangeburg - Strategic Planning
- Charleston County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council - Strategic Planning
- South Carolina Ports Authority - Union Pier Strategic Planning

Nonprofit & Government Support

- Sustainability Institute
- Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor
- Trust for Public Land
- Tri-County Cradle to Career
- Together Beaufort County
- Together SC
- Charleston Alternative to Detention
- Charleston County Just Home Project
- Explore Charleston Arts Analysis
- Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester Council of Governments
- City of Charleston Office for Children, Youth and Families
- Riley Mayors' Design Fellowship
- South Carolina City & County Management Association (SCCCMA)
- South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC)
- Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC)
- South Carolina Clerks to County Council



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